

MISSISSIPPI WIRELESS COMMUNICATION COMMISSION

October 6, 2005 Meeting Minutes

Place: MDOT 10th floor conference room

Meeting was called to order at 1:45 pm by Chairman George Phillips.

Commission Members Present:

MDOC	Chris Epps
Supervisors Association	Joel Yelverton
Department of ITS	David Litchliter
Mississippi DPS	George Phillips
Mississippi Highway Patrol	Marvin Curtis
Mississippi Homeland Security	Ed Worthington
Mississippi DOT	Willie Huff
MDEQ	Clovis Reed
SafeCity Initiative	Mark McCreery
MS Sheriffs' Association	James Newman
MS Association of Police Chiefs	Tommy Moffett

Advisory Members Present:

Representative Clayton Smith
Representative Tyrone Ellis
Senator Tom King

Chairman George Phillips called the meeting to order at 1:45 pm and began with the business agenda. Chairman Phillips asked the Commission if there was any need for an executive session before the meeting. Willie Huff responded and asked if that question could be asked at the end of the meeting. Chairman Phillips agreed.

Chairman Phillips asked for a motion to accept the minutes of the August 4th meeting. Chris Epps made the motion, and Col. Marvin Curtis seconded. The motion passed with none opposed.

The August 31 and September 1 meetings of the Commission were canceled due to Hurricane Katrina.

Joel Yelverton reported for the rules committee. He referred to a handout of Interim Purchasing Guidelines, which included written guidelines as well as a flow chart. He briefly explained the guidelines. State agencies will have one process, and local governments will have another process. Any request less than \$100,000 will need to be treated as any usual purchase. Requests of \$100,000 to \$250,000 will go to the review committee for evaluation. The review committee will then report back to the requester. For requests over \$250,000, the request will first go to the review committee. After reviewing the request, the committee will make a recommendation to the Commission.

Chairman Phillips commended the rules committee for the fine job done on the guidelines. Mr. Yelverton made a motion for the guidelines to be accepted keeping in mind that changes may need to be made in the future. Willie Huff seconded the motion, and it passed with none opposed.

Mr. Yelverton stated that they would be following the administrative procedures until the Commission receives notice from the Attorney General's office on whether or not to do so. There was discussion on how to notify the different agencies and local government offices of the new guidelines. Chairman Phillips stated that LeAnne Reeves still has a list of addresses from when the Commission sent notification letters to all the agencies and local governments. Mr. Yelverton suggested that the guidelines be posted on the DPS and ITS websites.

Chairman Phillips asked about any recent approvals, and the Commission was referred to a handout showing the recent requests, all of which were under the \$250,000 amount. Mr. Yelverton made a motion to approve the first three requests listed on the handout, which were for the Mississippi Forestry Commission, the Jackson Fire Department, and the Department of Public Safety. Chris Epps seconded the motion, and it passed with none opposed.

Ed Worthington stated that the Itawamba request on the handout be delayed until he receives more information from them. Mr. Worthington explained the last request listed on the handout was for the University of Mississippi on behalf of MEMA and DPS. Washington D.C. has put out an RFP for a solution to communicate during critical events in an urban environment. Mr. Worthington is going through the University of Mississippi to put together a RFP of the same type for the rural environment. Mr. Worthington explained that a company called GSS Net can use the regular FM radio waves to communicate important messages to the first responders. A motion was made by Chris Epps to approve the request for the University of Mississippi for the \$1.4 million project. Willie Huff asked how many devices this would cover. Mr. Worthington explained that devices would not be needed because chips could be added to existing devices. Mr. Worthington also explained that there must be protocols in place for using this system since it would be using FM radio. Mr. Huff asked if all points in the system would be sending information using the same frequency. Mr. Worthington responded that he was not sure because the University of Mississippi would be doing the research. Mr. Huff asked about text messaging on this system, and Mr. Worthington responded that it would be a one-way communication. Mr. Huff stated that the Commission needed to know which FM stations stayed operable during and after Katrina.

Chairman Phillips stated that he believed the Katrina-related emergency purchases had been resolved. Motorola had provided a system to Hancock County, which they will be leasing, instead of purchasing, from Motorola. The lease of that equipment will be paid for by FEMA. Chairman Phillips addressed the concerns to the Motorola representatives present. The Commissioner made it clear that it was the size of the purchase and not the specific technology being purchased which was the issue. He stated that in the future the Commission should look at establishing an emergency spending committee to control disaster spending. Willie Huff asked how the Governor's emergency order played into the spending. Chairman Phillips explained that this is a purchasing law, and that order was for reimbursable items.

Bill Roach discussed the RFP. He stated that there were some strategic areas where the Commission needed to provide input: 1. What is the scope of the project, and what is the time line? 2. Do we want the vendors to construct the towers or the state? 3. How do we evaluate the proposals? Mr. Roach suggested that the vendors have 90 days to respond and that the state have 90 days to evaluate. Depending on the final scope of the RFP, adjustments may be

made to this timeline. Chairman Phillips stated that we should complete vendor presentations before finalizing the RFP. After the vendor presentations, the Commission will meet in executive session to finalize the RFP.

Mark McCreery expressed a concern that we might be paying more for steel than for anything else if we were to build the towers. He suggested that we request additional information from the vendors regarding existing towers. We would need GPS points for those towers so we could map them. We would also need to know the capabilities of each tower. Willie Huff stated that the 1999 study lists what towers were available, and that we don't need to do the work for the vendors. The vendors have to tell us what towers will work best. Mr. Huff expressed concern that someone would have to pay for upgrading the old towers. Chairman Phillips stated that McCreery had a good point. If the vendors had the information, they could tell us more. David Litchliter stated that an attachment of that sort of information was already in the RFP.

Chairman Phillips stated that there would be another half-day for vendor presentations this month. There will also be more presentations on November 2nd and 3rd. The regular Commission meeting will be at 1:30 pm on November 3rd. Chairman Phillips inquired as to whether a meeting room at MDOT would be available, and Willie Huff replied that one would be available.

David Litchliter distributed copies of and briefly discussed a strategy paper from the Center for Digital Government – “Getting the Green Light: Safer Communities Through Mutual Aid & Critical Communications Interoperability”.

Chairman Phillips asked if there was any old business, and no one replied. There was also no new business. Chris Epps made a motion to adjourn. Willie Huff seconded the motion. Meeting adjourned at 2:30 pm.